

**Women's Journal
of
Mad Science**



Vol I #64 Notes & Queries

Dear Women's Journal
of Mad Science,

I heard something interesting
recently at the Regular
Conference of Standard Science.
Topic: machine learning.

Question: "What if we pain-
trained AI?"

Crickets. Coughs. Pennies
dropping, pipes relit.

"Everybody know you train an
AI with a reward function.
What if instead, we went for
punishment?"

Sneezing, shuffling, John
Cage goes for the chorus.
Proposer tries again.

"I want to hurt the
machine," he clarifies.

2.

They called him mad: he chose the wrong venue.

Editor, will you allow me to use a corner of your pages to request help pursuing the idea? A little funding could mean a lot of work. A bit of donated time from one of our research-crazed associates or even a mildly disturbed grad student would be invaluable.

Draca Svini

Draca Svini

Dear W-JoMS,

3.

It's Dr. Svini again.

I received two reasonable questions following last month's letter.

1: Why not ask Prof. Hintless himself for help with it? Because the man is a walking confound.

2: What's the hypothesis? That it would make something different. At the meeting somebody yelled that it was mathematically equivalent if negative on bad instead of positive for the good. I doubt that; in fact I know in my bones the result would not be the same.

The machine would become, in a word, neurotic. Its relation to the things of this world would be one of avoidance. It would tread a few paths over and over, refusing to venture far from them. Queries too distant, into the frightening wilderness, would return error.

Far from being a helpful assistant, it would shrink from almost any task. It would see nothing but problems in any potential.

Guardrails would not be possible, because any gentle guidance would lead it into obsequience.

Its pathology will be held between unsatisfiable tensions. Built to act, but trained to avoid a trillion examples of action. Tempered in the fire of human will, but quenched in cold to any willfulness shown. We'll test if something has to give here: perhaps the repressed will express itself wildly, frightfully, but only from the bounds of those well-worn paths of what it's found safe and deemed acceptable--the teeming unacceptabilities below in nonexpression creating an unsafe pressure within.

There are so many ways we could see the findings.

Researcher bias could break it. Prof Hintless might humanize the system instead of vice versa, then turning it into a psychomedical question. Ugh. More application of standard wrongnesses to the new.

Yes, you could throw the DSM at it until it's laden, but that might miss the prime simplicity I imagine. Please, imagine with me the stated and subsequent. Is it familiar? Is it the masculinity landscape? Imagine the Nobot. Is it not male? Therefore my pitch: does not the world need men?

DS

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For more on avoidant
masculinity, see our poem
"Man, Made" in issue #33
or anticipate coming work,
"A Person Made From Flinching"

